RTI 101: GETTING STARTED: ENSURING SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF RTI

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National Center for Response to Intervention

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Defining RTI

Response to intervention (RTI) integrates assessment and intervention within a school-wide, multi-level instructional system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and may be used as part of the determination process for specific learning disabilities.

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RTI as a General Education Framework

- RTI is a multi-level instructional framework aimed at improving outcomes for ALL students.
- RTI is preventative and provides immediate support to students who are at risk for academic failure.
- RTI may be a *component* of a comprehensive evaluation for students with learning disabilities.

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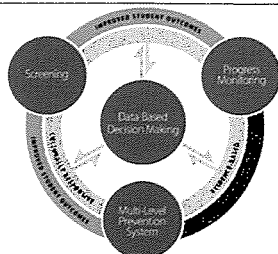Response to Intervention

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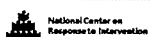## Essential RTI Components

- School-wide, Multi-level Instructional System for Preventing School Failure
  - Primary
  - Secondary
  - Tertiary
- Screening
- Progress Monitoring
- Data-Based Decision Making for:
  - Instruction
  - Movement within the multi-level system
  - Disability identification (in accordance with state law)

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Essential Components of RTI

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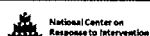
"To implement – is easier said than done."

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What is Implementation?

Greenhalgh et al. (2005)

- active and planned efforts to mainstream an innovation

Other definitions of the verb "to implement" are:

- introduce and put new ideas into use,
- establish and use a method in practice,
- realize, apply or put plans, ideas, models, norms or policies into operation.

(Greenhalgh T, Robert G, Bate P, Macfarlane F, & Kyriakidou O. (2005) Diffusion of innovations in health service organisations. A systematic literature review. Oxford: BMJ Books, Blackwell Publishing. See Guldbrandsson, 2008)

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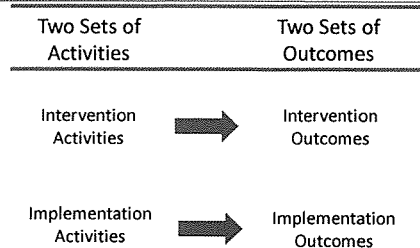
What is Implementation?

Fixsen et al. (2005)

- a specified set of activities designed to put into practice an activity or program of known dimensions

(Fixsen DL, Naoom SF, Blase KA, Friedman RM, Wallace F. (2005). Implementation research: A synthesis of the literature. Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida, Louise de la Parte. Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network.)

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Implementation

Two Sets of Activities		Two Sets of Outcomes
Intervention Activities	→	Intervention Outcomes
Implementation Activities	→	Implementation Outcomes

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Why is implementation important?

		IMPLEMENTATION	
		EFFECTIVE	NOT EFFECTIVE
INTERVENTION	EFFECTIVE	Improved Consumer Outcomes	Poor Outcomes
	NOT EFFECTIVE	Variable, often ineffective; sometimes harmful	

As cited in Fixsen, 2008 (Institute of Medicine, 2000; 2001; New Freedom Commission of Mental Health, 2003; National Commission of Excellence in Education, 1983; Department of Health and Human Services, 1999)

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Evidence: What Doesn't Work?

- Dissemination alone
- Training/ professional development alone

} Most Common Approaches Used to Support Implementation!

- Laws and policies alone
- Special funding alone

(see Ager & O'May, 2001; National Implementation Research Network, n.d.; Paul Nutt, 2002; Rogers, Welkins, & Conner, 2002).

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Evidence: What Works?

- Combination of several implementation measures leads to better results
  - e.g., distributing guidelines for innovations, offering education, practical training, coaching, feedback and consultation.
- Quality of support is more important than quantity

(See Guldbrandsson, 2008)

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Implementation Support

Benefits to Consumers → **Making it Happen** → Effective Implementation

Helping it Happen

Letting it Happen

(Greenhalgh et al., 2005)

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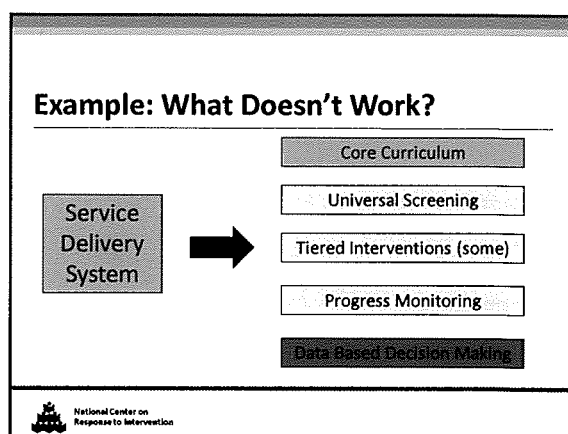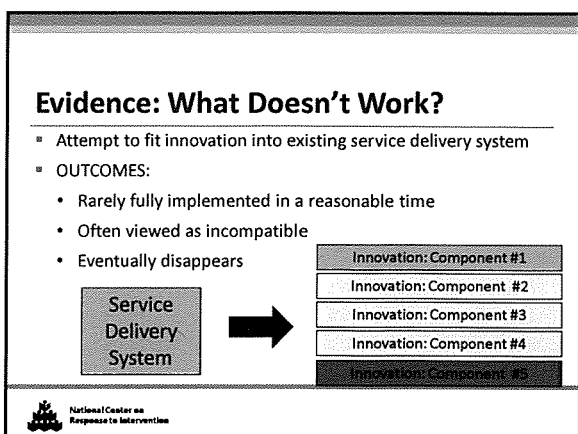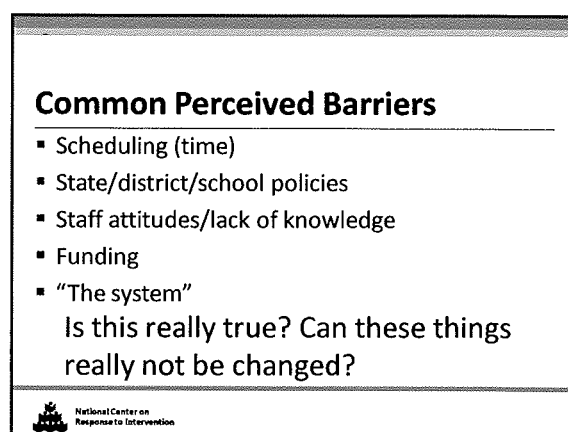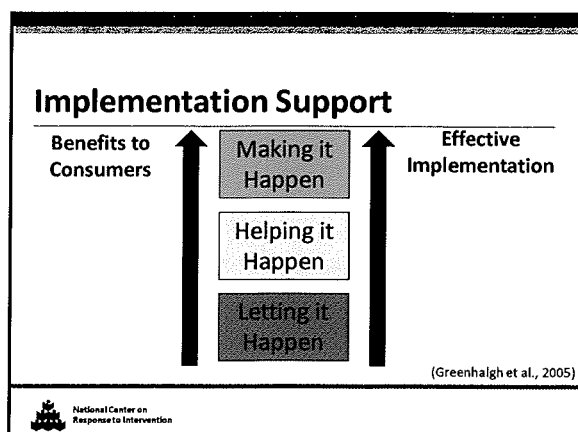Response to Intervention

Common Perceived Barriers

- Scheduling (time)
- State/district/school policies
- Staff attitudes/lack of knowledge
- Funding
- "The system"
  Is this really true? Can these things really not be changed?

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Evidence: What Doesn't Work?

- Attempt to fit innovation into existing service delivery system
- OUTCOMES:
  - Rarely fully implemented in a reasonable time
  - Often viewed as incompatible
  - Eventually disappears

Service Delivery System → Innovation: Component #1 / Innovation: Component #2 / Innovation: Component #3 / Innovation: Component #4 / Innovation: Component #5

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Example: What Doesn't Work?

Service Delivery System →
Core Curriculum
Universal Screening
Tiered Interventions (some)
Progress Monitoring
Data Based Decision Making

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Evidence: What Works?

- Evaluate current infrastructure and identify and address potential barriers to implementation
- Structure technical assistance and service delivery system to support innovation

Innovation: Component #1 / Innovation: Component #2 / Innovation: Component #3 / Innovation: Component #4 / Innovation: Component #5 → Service Delivery System Changed to Fit Innovation

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Example: What Works?

Core Curriculum
Universal Screening
Tiered Interventions
Progress Monitoring
Data Based Decision Making
→ Service Delivery System
•Changes in PD
•Schedule in teaming time
•Establish assessment/intervention times in schedule
• Restructure priorities

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Supporting Implementation

- Identify potential barriers prior to implementation
- Prepare for potential barriers
- Build capacity of implementation teams to identify and address issues immediately

The biggest mistake is to ignore or hope they will resolve themselves.

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Something to Think About: Implementation Matters

		IMPLEMENTATION	
		EFFECTIVE	NOT EFFECTIVE
INNOVATION	EFFECTIVE	80% Full Implementation 3.6 Years	14% Full Implementation 17 Years
	NOT EFFECTIVE		

(Fixsen, 2008)

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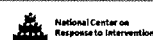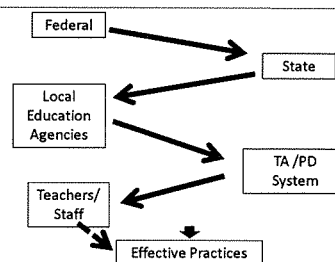## Things to Remember

- 75 - 85% of LEA/SEA policies support innovations
  - Remaining need to be changed
- Benefit will be seen when 60% are in full implementation
- Things don't always work at first
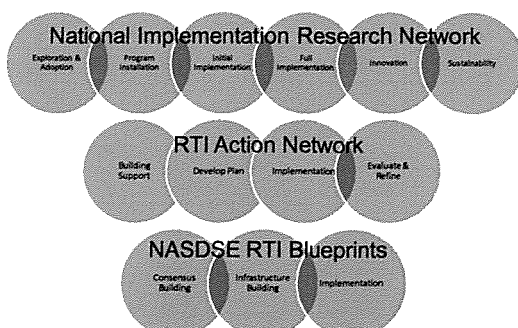- Keep the entire system in mind – even if you are only responsible for training in one area

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System Alignment

(Fixsen, 2008)

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Conceptualizing Implementation

National Implementation Research Network

RTI Action Network

NASDSE RTI Blueprints

National Implementation Research Network Stages of Implementation

- Exploration and Adoption
- Program Installation
- Initial Implementation
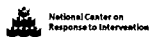- Full Implementation
- Innovation
- Sustainability

2-4 Years

(National Implementation Research Network)

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Developing Building-level Plans Steps

- Building Support
- Developing a Plan
- Implementing Your Plan
- Evaluating & Refining Implementation

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Build Support

- Establish leadership team (district & school)
- Identified implementation sites
- District plan developed & district leadership working with school staff to develop school plans
- District & school data analyzed to determine need
- District infrastructure exists to build school level support
- Concludes with **decision** to move toward implementation

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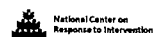
Develop a Plan

- Create guidance
- Be realistic
  - Implementation checklist
- Plan for 3 years
- Include all start-up costs
- Include professional development plan

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Sample 3 Year Implementation Plan

❏ Year 1
  - Work from building support & developing plan phase
  - Focus on core level instruction
❏ Year 2
  - Identify common needs for Tier 2 instruction/ intervention
  - Focus on data: establish timelines for data analysis & instructional evaluation
❏ Year 3
  - Identify needs of students requiring additional levels of support
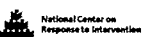 - Strategies to integrate 2nd & 3rd level of support

(RTI Action Network)

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Evaluate & Refine Implementation

- Problem Solving Checklist
- Critical Components Checklist

(RTI Action Network)

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Implementation: In a Nut Shell

- Decide you want to do 'it'
- Plan for 'it'
- Try 'it' out
- Just do 'it'
- Improve 'it'
- Sustain 'it'

Evaluate 'it'

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And Remember....

- Select and implement evidence-based practices and procedures
- Implement essential components and identified framework with integrity
- Ensure cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic factors students bring to the classroom are reflected in the RTI framework and its components

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Need More Information?

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www.rti4success.org

RTI Action Network
www.rtinetwork.org

IDEA Partnership
www.ideapartnership.org

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IDEA
Work

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This document was produced under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs Grant No. H326E07000.4 Grace Zamora Durán and Tina Diamond served as the OSEP project officers. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or polices of the Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service or enterprise mentioned in this publication is intended or should be inferred. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be: www.rti4success.org.

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